

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

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FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4631

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO USDEL MBFR VIENNA

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T USNATO 6233

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO, MBFR

SUBJECT: MBFR: OPTION III: RECIPROCAL LIMITATIONS

REFS: A) MBFR VIENNA 541 DTG 151030Z NOV 75; B) USNATO 6098

DTG 081110Z NOV 75

1. WE AGREE WITH VIENNA THAT AN EARLY US COMMENT ON THE RECIPROCAL LIMITATIONS QUESTION IS NEEDED IF THE ALLIES ARE TO HAVE THE OPTION OF TABLING AN OPTION III PROPOSAL THIS NEGOTIATING ROUND (REF A). THE ALLIES WILL NEED TIME TO DIGEST THE US COMMENT, WHATEVER IT IS.

2. AS WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, ALL ALLIES EXCEPT THE FRG HAVE AGREED WITH THE US LANGUAGE THAT THE SOVIETS BE ASKED TO AGREE THEY WOULD NOT INCREASE ANALAGOUS NUCLEAR ELEMENTS -IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO UNDERMINE THE BASIS OF THE AGREEMENT." THE FRG HAS CONSIDERED THIS PHRASE DANGEROUSLY VAGUE, AND IN ITS RECENT "COMPROMISE" TEXT ON EQUIPMENT LIMITATIONS, TOOK CARE TO BRACKET THE PHRASE. FRG IS SECRET

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CONCERNED THAT THE PHRASE COULD LEAD TO A FIRM LIMIT ON US TANKS WITHOUT PROVIDING A REAL LIMIT ON SOVIET NUCLEAR ELEMENTS IN THE NGA. ONLY THE FRG HAS REQUESTED FURTHER US COMMENT ON THE MEANING OF THE PHRASE.

3. THE SIMPLEST COURSE FOR EARLY ALLIED AGREEMENT ON RECIPROCAL ELEMENTS WOULD BE, AS VIENNA SUGGESTS, FOR THE FRG TO DROP ITS BRACKETS AND ACCEPT THE PHRASE. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE IT MIGHT BE DIFFICULT FOR FRG TO AGREE. ANY COURSE WHICH APPEARED TO LEAD TOWARD A LIMIT ON SOVIET NUCLEAR ELEMENTS, AND THEREFORE ON US TANKS. WITHOUT CLEAR ALLIED UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THESE LIMITS WOULD BE, WOULD ENCOUNTER RESISTANCE FROM FRG.

4. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE THAT IF A STOPGAP SOLUTION IS NEEDED, WHICH WOULD DEFER THE QUESTION OF RECIPROCAL LIMITATIONS, IT MIGHT BE EASIER TO GET THE FRG ON BOARD BY DROPPING RECIPROCAL LIMITATIONS ALTOGETHER FROM THE DRAFT GUIDANCE, AND BY REGISTERING IN THE POSITION PAPER THAT THE ALLIES AGREE THAT THE SUBJECT REMAINS OPEN FOR LATER ALLIED CONSIDERATION. IT WOULD NOT APPEAR DIFFICULT TO OPEN THE RECIPROCAL ELEMENTS QUESTION LATER WITH THE EAST, AND TH EAST WOULD IN FACT PROBABLY RAISE THE QUESTION.
BRUCE

SECRET

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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